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Leyburn noted that the United States occupation affected the nature and rigidity of the barriers separating the yeomanry from the elite. For instance, he calls attention to the fact that the presidents elected during the United States occupation were light-skinned members of the elite. It seemed almost inevitable that, when the North Americans sought men through whom to prosecute their plans for "stabilizing" Haiti, they would settle on educated and worldly politicians, men who were both sufficiently trained and sufficiently pliant for the task. That these men were predominantly light-skinned was a corollary aspect of Haitian social history. In this way Washington played some part in reinforcing and expanding elite power; and herein lies a paradox with which the author of *The Haitian People* has dealt well. While the elite had been able to maintain their wealth and power in Haiti for nearly a century, the presidential succession before the United States occupation had largely been one of military chieftains, principally dark-skinned men from the north of the Republic. Michel Oreste, who had ruled for nine months in 1913–14, was the first civilian to be chosen president in Haiti's entire history up to that time; and Sudre Dartiguenave (1915–22), the North Americans' choice, was the first president since 1879 who was both a southerner and light-skinned. From the last quarter of the nineteenth century until the occupation, in other words, Haiti's presidents were almost entirely dark-skinned northern provincial leaders who literally seized power by invading Port-au-Prince and deposing their predecessors.

Hence, in describing the separation between elite and yeomanry, it is essential to notice the traditional special role of the military, with its particular overtones of color. Here was one institutional feature of Haitian society which was not directly dominated by the elite, and through which nonelite folk were able to attain special power. But in Haiti's case it is significant that the army itself was not firmly institutionalized; regional warlords, rather than a centralized officer corps, made the decisions. Leyburn cites Auguste Magloire, who enumerated *sixty-nine* "important" revolutions between 1806 and 1879; had this enumeration gone forward, it would have been much longer. Of Haiti's twenty-four chief executives between 1807 and 1915, only eight were in office for a period equal to their elected terms, and seventeen were deposed by revolution. Before the United States occupation, then, the continuing power of the elite could be seen as somewhat separate from the succession of nonelite generals who seized office over the years.

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The financing of these many revolutions was usually provided by foreign merchants, bent upon installing a government that would grant them special economic concessions (Munro, 1964:326–31). The United States occupation ended this doleful succession of regimes and, by throwing its weight to the elite, by suppressing military activity in the countryside, and by reforming the army, the United States gave a new meaning to the separation of the elite and the yeomanry. Leyburn's interpretation is consistent with these events; yet some Haitian scholars have differed with Leyburn's analysis.

In a lengthy review article, the dean of Haitian historians, Dr. Jean Price-Mars (1942:1–50), questions the applicability of the term "caste" to the social groupings of Haitian society. He notes that Haitian law after the revolution never legitimized any distinction on grounds of physical type, unlike a society such as the United States—that in fact, the very basis of Haitian polity was the absence of such distinctions. Furthermore, Leyburn's interpretation is qualified by the fact that the elite and the rural masses are not entirely distinctive physically. In some parts of rural Haiti, particularly in the southern peninsula, there are many light-skinned people; and many individuals who qualify as members of the elite on all other counts are very dark in appearance. The fact that being "Negro" or "white" in Haiti is viewed as a matter of degree, rather than of kind, complicated by all the other criteria of social position employed in drawing distinctions, has important implications for the way social barriers have operated in that country.*

Leyburn did not contend that all the effects of the United States occupation were in the direction of increasing the gap between the ELITE AND THE YEOMANRY.

* In this regard, Haiti is aligned with most of Latin America, in contradistinction to the United States, where many persons believe that "one drop of Negro blood" [sic] makes a "Negro." The failure of North Americans to distinguish between sociological and genetic categories of physical type has led to considerable confusion in their dealings with Latin America and in their understanding of Latin American societies. North American race prejudice at its most extreme sees color as the primary basis for social ranking, and no individual accomplishment (for instance, in terms of economic or intellectual success) can overshadow the inferior status unalterably bestowed by certain physical traits. Haitian—and generally all Latin American—social distinctions do not rest solely on considerations of physical type; a black skin does not "doom" an individual if his attainments make him otherwise the equal of his lighter-skinned fellow citizens. Hence, it might be argued that the term "caste" would be more appropriate when applied to the Negro people of the United States (regardless of phenotype, and including those "Negroes" who are *sociologically* identified with the Negro people even if their physical appearance is dramatically Caucasian) than when applied to the peoples of Latin America.

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175 643 66 The course of events leading up to Duvalier's election are difficult to assess. Fignolé, whom the army had permitted to serve as president for sixteen days during the interregnum, had been denied official recognition by the United States, suggesting that this country feared the implications of his political philosophy; his attempts at passing a whole new code of far-reaching social legislation apparently frightened the army, which removed him on grounds of "maintaining order." By the time an election decree was promulgated in August 1957, Fignolé was disqualified, and Jumelle had been forced to withdraw from candidacy. By election day, September 1957, only Déjoie and Duvalier were in contention, while Jumelle had gone into hiding. An attempted general strike, probably led by Déjoieiste elements, was stopped by the army, and Dr. François Duvalier was elected to power.

175 642 66 701 643 The Duvalier regime, beyond any doubt, has added something new to the Haitian political scene. To begin with, it must be stressed that Duvalier enjoys some popular support in the countryside as well as in the urban centers. For many Haitians, Duvalier epitomizes the return of the Estimé philosophy to Haiti, and it would be a serious political error to suppose that the present regime is no more than an elite-hating dictatorship backed by machine guns. At the same time, the readiness of the Duvalieristes to use force probably exceeds that of any Haitian government in more than a century. Its excesses, moreover, appear to break certain traditions of political behavior—for instance, the unwillingness to take familial connections into account when political revenge is being carried out, the violence committed against women and adolescents regarded as political enemies, and so on. The most important break with tradition, however, has been the gradual undermining of the army as a political force—a force created in the first instance during the United States occupation.

175 642 648 643 In carrying out its plans, the Duvalier government has played more creatively upon inconsistencies in United States policy than any preceding regime. It used United States military and economic power to consolidate itself, while employing a posture of anti-North American hostility in its search for other internal sources of political support. Most strikingly, it has capitalized on the deterioration of the United States design in the Caribbean region, both to exact concessions and to enhance an international image of itself as a stalwart "democratic"

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regime. That President Duvalier has been able to stay in power in spite of internal dissaffection, sometime hostile United States propaganda, a dire economic situation, personal ill health, and other woes, is a tribute to his political acumen, if not to his principles. None of this means, of course, that such consummate skill will continue to work; Haitian governments have a way of falling suddenly, and the Duvalier regime will probably not prove an exception.

Dr. Duvalier's success indicates that he has made certain correct assessments, not only of Haiti's social and political structure but also of United States policy with regard to Haiti. The occupation was notable for its failure to make any telling alterations in the economic structure or level of development of the country. Many beneficial changes were made, as Leyburn demonstrates, particularly in the areas of health and health services, communications, government administration, education, and transport (though the use of corvée labor on the roads led to serious abuses, and stimulated sanguinary guerilla warfare). But most significantly, the United States institutionalized the army and police forces. The ragged bands of political mercenaries of the past were dissolved; the officer-ridden army was transformed into a small, well-trained, and well-organized force. Eventual firm control by this force of weaponry, communications, and transport ended the era of presidential succession by invasion, turned the army into the major locus of nonelectoral, president-making power, and may have ended forever the possibility of an agrarian revolt against the central authority. Another political effect of the occupation was the importance it imparted to the United States ambassador, whose political opinions thereafter would matter significantly in the transmission of power at the top of the Haitian governmental system. The Duvalier regime has continuously taken full account of the consequences of United States interest; and its leaders have been able to watch the operation of that interest in the political events occurring between the fall of the Lescot government and the present.

In the view of one acute observer, President Duvalier, in order to consolidate his power, had to cope with three other loci of political strength in addition to the army and the United States ambassador. The business community, located for the most part in Port-au-Prince, had strongly supported Déjoie's candidacy during the interregnum; its leaders were mainly members of the elite, and many had strong

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175 643 66 795 business and personal ties with North Americans and other foreign groups. Among the families of these leaders are Swiss, German, and French nationals, and some Syrians and Lebanese who hold United States citizenship. The business community had played a part in the downfall of the Magloire regime, and business strikes were a typical political instrument for putting pressure on presidential incumbents. In addition, the clergy—particularly the Catholic clergy—exerted political influence. Duvalier, while well aware of this, also attended to the importance of vodoun* in Haiti, and to the influence wielded by its cult leaders, particularly in the countryside and among the urban poor. Finally, the President understood the strength of groups such as the university students, the small but politically aware labor unions, and certain professional associations, whose political strength could be felt particularly in times of crisis. The Duvalier regime has displayed intelligence as well as ruthlessness in dealing with these diverse centers of political strength and potential opposition.

175 648 701 702 66 The official request for a United States Marine Corps mission to "train" the Haitian Army was a brilliant political move by Duvalier, apparently designed to serve several objectives simultaneously. It is entirely correct that the renewed presence of the Marines in Haiti created considerable rancor in some circles, but it also strengthened Duvalier's hand in his dealings with all sources of internal opposition. To some extent it apparently reassured the business community; and it turned out to have reduced, rather than to have increased, the maneuverability of the United States in developing a "corrective" or "restraining" policy toward the Duvalier regime. Perhaps most important, it helped Duvalier in his plan to build a praetorian guard to counterbalance the power of the army itself.

625 [701] [652] The *tonton macoute*—a Creole epithet for the bogeyman—is an extremely interesting variation on the security police theme. Its members wear no official uniform (though blue denim pants and felt hats are affected). Members of the "TTM" carry out acts of terrorism against groups and individuals and have seriously weakened the policing function and prestige of the regular army. Some calculations put the operating costs of the TTM as high as one third of the governmental budget. Though small groups of the TTM are distributed

* Or, as it is more commonly called, "voodoo." Creole words employed in this introduction are transcribed in Laubach orthography (see Hall, 1953). It was not possible to extend this transcription to the original Leyburn text, where a "Gallic" orthography is followed.

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throughout the country, the central administration remains in the capital; urban units are dispatched to the countryside at times, if any show of internal political resistance is sensed. TTM members also sometimes engage in struggles with each other over political spoils; but too little is known to analyze internal strains within this paramilitary, secret-police organization. The TTM has proved particularly useful for carrying out the murders of outspoken individual political opponents and for crushing draconically any threat of strikes in the Port-au-Prince business community.

Little is known of the antecedents of TTM members. While it is customary among the elite to describe these myrmidons as "trash," some of them are literate, have some education, vaunt a political ideology—a kind of nationalist-*négritude* mystique, with strong Fascist elements—and differ dramatically from the ragged, illiterate followers of the warlords of pre-1915 Haiti. In fact, the TTM lieutenants are a direct, if somewhat deformed, product of the Estimé regime, a decade of structurally unsound prosperity, a culturally nationalistic ideology, and, more remotely, of the United States occupation itself.

With regard to the army, Duvalier has followed a policy of careful attrition. While the United States Marine Corps "mission" was (probably unknowingly) serving to immobilize opposition, Duvalier began to change the character of the army general staff. In the course of less than seven years he completely revamped the leadership of the army five times; this process not only kept the colonels off balance but allowed the President to reward loyal younger followers—principally those with dark skins, it is said—with rapid promotions.

The relationship between the Duvalier regime and the Catholic clergy has been one of increasing alienation. At times members of the clergy stood high in the regime, two having even served as members of the cabinet; but not the slightest Church resistance has been tolerated. The low point in Duvalier–Church relations was the interruption of a mass by an armed TTM unit in downtown Port-au-Prince; leading members of the hierarchy later were summarily ejected from the country, and the Jesuit order was banned. Church power has waned significantly, both in the capital and in the countryside, as the regime has consolidated itself. Some observers believe that Duvalier is not so unwise as to aim at the complete elimination of the Church, but that he hopes instead to "nationalize" the clergy on some mutually agreeable basis.

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development of interior transport. The only passable roads in the Republic run from Aux Cayes in the south to the capital, and from Cap Haïtien in the north to the capital. Transport and communications simply symbolize the power that Port-au-Prince wields, since the same circumstances characterize all national institutional arrangements. Thus Haiti is an extreme example of urban domination, even though its urban population is a fraction of the national total. The consequence has been to keep most of the rural folk cut off from the apparatus that effects national decisions and shapes national policy. Haiti's national legislature, never important in limiting presidential power, is less so today than ever; at best, it had only represented the interests of provincial towns as opposed to the capital, and never the interests of the mass of country people.

The local military and judiciary officials possess the formal authority vested in them by the state, and their power is very considerable. Few local people would dare challenge their decisions, and the devices for appeal against arbitrary exercise of authority are few. Admittedly, at the lowest local level the *chef de section*—who is traditionally appointed by the captain of the military in the *commune* center and is himself a yeoman—is subject to some genuine restraint by local inhabitants. Jean Comhaire-Sylvain (1955:620–24) has argued convincingly that the people of a community are capable of insisting on democratic procedure in those matters requiring decision that come to the attention of local authority. But such decisions have little or nothing to do with larger issues. The yeomanry cannot directly make its wishes felt in national politics; and national politics are conducted almost without reference to the aspirations of the rural masses. It is precisely in the separateness of local life from the mainstream of national decision-making that the political impotence of the yeomanry is demonstrated.

Haiti's agrarian nature cannot be expressed simply by saying it is a rural and yeoman country. Haiti does not have a "land problem," as that phrase is conventionally applied to Latin America. It does, it is true, suffer from land shortage, inasmuch as too little land is worked at too low a level of productivity and must feed too many mouths. But a very substantial proportion of the rural masses owns land, or has regular access to it. It is true that most land is held in small plots and without clear title. But those persons who own no land or who lack land to work are proportionally fewer than in any other Carib-

3: Leyburn Z-4.5 (no date) 1966
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people: "If ever you refuse, or grumblingly accept, the laws which the genius guarding your destinies dictates to me for your happiness, you will merit the fate of ungrateful people. But perish that hideous idea!" There can be little doubt that he wished Haiti under his direction to become prosperous; but it is likewise clear that he was personally self-centred and inordinately grasping.

Each step Dessalines took to further his ambitions either for Haitian prosperity or for his own fortunes had its bearing upon the development of social classes in the country. Extermination of all remaining whites was one of the first tasks he set himself. On a promise of clemency he lured several hundred gullible French out of hiding, and butchered them in cold blood. His campaign of extirpation was methodical and thorough. To try to penetrate into the psychological background of this violence is to desert fact for speculation: it may have been a desire for revenge on the French, pure and simple; it may have been gloating sadism; he may have wished to warn France against any future attempts to regain possession of the country; or he may have wanted to notify his subjects of his intention to rule with severe discipline. Certainly this last aim was achieved, if any of his people did not already know, after two years of warfare, the extent of his ruthlessness. He ruled by fear and by threats, never by the cultivation of loyalties.

Apparently he was afraid that Napoleon would renew his efforts to subdue the former colony. To forestall such an attempt he ordered each of his governing subalterns to construct one great fort on the most prominent hill in their district—a scheme which led immediately to the institution of forced labor. He likewise devised a plan, not actually put into effect, for destroying all towns and plantations near the coast and moving the capital to an inland village; and so isolating Haitians from all contact with the outside world.

Turning to domestic policy, he faced a herculean task. The warfare of 1802–3 had left the country in chaos. Plantations and agricultural projects were almost totally ruined. All habits of steady industry had been lost. Dread of a possible new attack by the French made necessary a great army, and this in turn removed most able-bodied men from productive labor in the fields, while the construction of fortresses still further depleted the labor supply. The first census of free Haiti, in 1805 (probably not highly accurate), showed only 380,000 people, with the women outnumbering men by almost three to two.

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175 were abolished; with such concessions the people must be satisfied.
566 Dessalines tacitly confessed his inability to follow any course but the French colonial system, with modifications introduced by Toussaint.

167 Many of the blacks, having tasted a moment's freedom, were not
175 inclined to give it up. Before the new order of Dessalines was firmly established, therefore, they ran away with their families into the hills, where they escaped official notice. As squatters they lived out their lives unmolested. By the time they were officially rediscovered, all Haiti had become a land of peasants.

175 At the other end of the ladder from the laborers were the officials,
463 who might be great men or small clerks, members of the entourage
555 of the governor-general or merely overseers of a plantation. In order
647 to keep the vast agricultural economy functioning smoothly it was
565 necessary to have hundreds of agents, directors, clerks, and overseers, each of whom must report to a superior. In this official class there was at least a possibility of realizing an ambition for oneself; there was a basis of comparison; more important, there was some possibility of attracting favorable attention of persons in high places and so of gaining promotion. Inevitably something of the colonial state of mind must have carried over into the new era, so that an ex-slave would consider himself as having risen in the world to be now performing a task which only white men used to do—to be spared field labor and to direct the work of others. Out of this group of petty agents rose a few men of ambition who were later to belong to the élite.

175 Higher officers of state were in a much more favorable position to
565 achieve social eminence. Not only did they perform no manual
647 labor; they were twice removed from that life, since they directed the men who directed the workers. They handled funds. They came
[212] into contact with Dessalines himself. Many former gens de couleur filled these important posts, for the number of Haitians who could read and write was woefully limited.

175 The army was the great power in the country, for the new state
● 701 was a military one. Since fear of a return of the French required the maintenance of a large standing army,[4] Dessalines made a virtue of this apparent necessity, using his soldiers to enforce discipline among the cultivators. On whom else could he rely for his local administra-

4. Humboldt estimated that the army of Dessalines numbered 37,300, which would be one tenth of the total population. Other estimates run as low as 15,000. Even this figure would be about a tenth of the male population.

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tion? Here again, the decision of a leader fixed the direction of Haitian life for decades to come. It is agreed by commentators that overmilitarization was the bane of nineteenth-century Haiti. One tenth of all able-bodied men were constantly in active army service. Moreover, all the male cultivators on plantations must hold themselves in readiness to obey the government's call to arms; ammunition and arms were stored in every parish. A military mentality was nourished, the people early learning the lesson (apparently unchallenged by any liberal) that the army should rule and the people obey.

Although the common soldiers were ex-slaves who, upon dismissal from service, would return to the ranks of agricultural workers, their officers had a higher status. Noncommissioned officers had a long road to travel to eminence, but like the overseers they had at least a glimpse of the promised land of distinction. Captains and generals had this vision within their grasp: they were already of the élite.

In the subcategory of "artisans" were included all the townspeople who carried on crafts or trades. It must be remembered that Haiti had no cities, and that its two largest towns then numbered probably no more than 10,000 people each, so that artisans were not numerous. Since there was a distinction in the arduousness of various pursuits as well as in their financial return there existed in this category, as in the official and military, some chance for social prestige.

The only persons remaining outside the categories mentioned were colored landowners who had held estates in the colonial period. Dessalines took active steps to gain control of most of the land in the country, but at his death in 1806 there were still many of the old proprietors left who were, in the main, determined to hold their land and preserve their dignity as non-laborers.

Assassination by his political foes ended the career of Dessalines only two years after he assumed power. In 1805 he had had himself crowned emperor in imitation of Napoleon, but unlike Napoleon he permitted no nobility. "*Moi seul, je suis noble!*" he replied to ambitious henchmen who asked for the establishment of a peerage. It was the Emperor's tactless handling of the social situation which caused his murder, for he touched sensitive nerves on the raw in attacking property rights, inherited privilege, color distinctions, and social aspirations. The cultivators grumblingly accepted his decrees; the ambitious upper group did not.

The former affranchis fully intended to keep their lands once the

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The result was entirely different from Boyer's expectations. As a French critic graphically puts it, the Haitians

> who had never had more than a borrowed energy—that inspired by fear of French invasion—when they saw themselves freed, by a solemn treaty, from all attack on their coasts, seemed to allow their arms to drop relaxed at their sides, saying, *Let's take a rest.* The soldier who up till now had squeezed his body into a uniform and had subjected himself to European discipline, shouldering his arms, staring straight ahead as if seeing nothing, now began to leave unbuttoned the uniform which choked him, dragged a mattress into his sentry-box so that he might sleep through his watch, and let his cross slip to the earth never to pick it up again.[44]

In short, the Haitian army as a disciplined force ceased to exist, and with it all authority of its officers. Boyer had counted upon the army to enforce the provisions of the Code Rural, but now a soldier's life was a paid sinecure. By gaining political security Haiti had inadvertently lost its last chance of economic prosperity through a system of forced labor.

Wherever the Code was put into partial operation, revenue from plantations continued to decline. The price of real estate dropped proportionately. It was a simple matter for workmen who had signed contracts to avoid carrying out their stipulations, and just as simple to evade the law requiring fifteen acres' minimum for a single holding. Practically every Haitian wanted to own a bit of land; once he had acquired his bit, however small, he had (or so he felt) earned an exemption from directed labor.

Only on estates near the few big towns, where government officials were concentrated, was there much pretense of trying to enforce the Code. Sentries at the gates of Port-au-Prince were authorized to confiscate plantains, yams, or fruit brought by any worker who, in contravention of the Code, had strayed to market on a forbidden day, but sentries soon acquired the habit of not seeing countryfolk who passed the gates. Reports kept cropping up that rural policemen were robbing poor cultivators of their coffee under pretense of protecting them from the penalties for breach of the law; this suggests that the Code was used rather for graft than for the stimulation of agriculture.

By and large, however, the Code was merely ignored. Agents could not be found who were willing to stand in any community

44. Lepelletier de Saint-Remy, *Saint-Domingue*, II, 181.

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unplanned, undesired

Haitian peasantry. To sum up, began as the result of two policies intended to achieve ends quite different; first, presidential gifts of land, the chief purpose of which had been to pay the soldiers of the republic; and second, the crop-sharing system adopted by landlords after the failure of Boyer's Code.

6. *The Drawing of Caste Lines* (*1820–1843*)

Almost every major presidential aim of Boyer came to grief. His tranquil quarter-century rule, the unified island, the financial surplus with which his presidency began, the peace with France after 1825—all these advantages combined with his good intentions did not save his projects from shipwreck. Near the beginning of his régime he announced that, like his revered predecessor Pétion, he felt the safety of Haiti to lie in the abolition of all color distinctions and prejudices. Just as his great Code Rural proved a complete failure, however, so did his efforts to do away with the color line. On the contrary, it was during Boyer's time that class distinctions became fixed, in large part although not wholly, on the basis of color.

Stating that the policy of his government was to put an end, as far as possible, to jealousies of caste, he consistently for a few years promoted a black every time a promotion had been given to a mulatto or other light-skinned person. This procedure soon met an insuperable obstacle. Government posts in general required literacy, and only a very small number of blacks were educated, so that the supply of Negroes was not sufficient to furnish him with candidates. Since one of the few roads to lucrative success lay in official positions, ambitious young colored men sought eagerly for government office, and Boyer soon had no alternative but to advance men of his own complexion. In the army, on the other hand, literacy was not necessary for promotion. Ambitious Negro youths, therefore, frequently chose this career which, while not very profitable in monetary rewards, at least gave a man a certain social status and economic security.

Because of the state of education in the republic, consequently, an ugly situation developed, with the civil arm of government almost wholly in control of the colored element and the military force dominated by blacks. Fortunately for the country no crisis developed during the 1820's and 1830's which made an open breach between army and state.

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175 an ineffective government, momentarily in the hands of colored
563 élite. Attempting to dominate politics was a numerically small group
565 of colored people and a still smaller group of Negroes. Although
[701] prevailingly black, the army might be, and in the later nineteenth
[669] century was continually, used by whichever group offered more. A third power, a middle class, might have balanced these antagonistic factions. Lacking such a moderating influence, Haiti was the victim of recurrent revolutionary movements.

175 At the time of Boyer, actual democracy would have been no safe-
178 guard, for it would have meant the supremacy of ignorance. His
642 rule was the beginning of unfortunate days for Haiti. After the
643 auspicious opening years, the President became an impotent onlooker as his country declined. It is instructive to compare the Haiti of Dessalines and Christophe with the Haiti of 1843, only one generation later.[62]

175 The Haiti of 1806 had been a beehive of activity. Soldiers, fore-
178 men, and policemen then stood over the workers with lianes to
642 force them to labor for the benefit of their state. Production was
433 carefully planned, an ordered hierarchy making every person in the
466 country responsible to another higher than himself until the ruler was reached at the pinnacle. The cardinal fault of any laborer was to shirk at his task. The year 1843, on the contrary, found Haiti in a condition of quiescence which, to those who remembered the old days, resembled torpor. The central government had ceased to drive its citizens, and its half-hearted attempts at persuasion were futile. Overseers, drivers of gangs of workers, soldiers whose duty it was to enforce labor, had disappeared from the scene. Every man was his own master.

175 The standard of living in 1806 as in 1843 was low; but in the earlier
178 year there had been a promise of great things to come once Haiti
511 had rebuilt what war had destroyed. The succeeding years, however, failed to inculcate into the people a desire for any higher standard of life. Country dwellers were benighted; ignorance deepened the habit

[162] 62. Haiti has never had an accurate census, so that it is impossible even to estimate
[175] the total population of the country either in 1806 or in 1843. The figures of 380,000 and 800,000 given by some authors for the two years are mere guesses. Likewise, one can only deduce the proportion of people in the main economic and social categories; probably seventy-five per cent of the Haitians were serfs in 1806 and the same percentage peasants in 1843; the "aristocracy," including all who did not derive a living by manual labor or army service, could hardly have reached five per cent in either year; the army, house servants, day laborers in the towns, and petty businessmen would make up the other twenty per cent.

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Political history of the next seventy-two years is a complicated story, of which only enough need be told here to illuminate the evolution of caste and social distinctions. Even a short summary reveals the bewildering confusion. Of the twenty-two heads of state between 1843 and 1915 only one served out his prescribed term of office;[2] three died while serving, one was blown up with his palace, one presumably poisoned, and one hacked to pieces by a mob; one resigned. The other fourteen were deposed by revolution after incumbencies ranging in length from three months to twelve years.

The Revolution of 1843 brought back into national prominence the whole matter of color and caste. The young revolutionaries, mostly light-skinned, seem to have assumed that their group was permanently in control. With cavalier highhandedness they set about capturing the last stronghold of Negro eminence: the army. They soon found, however, that they had caught a Tartar; their attempt to rule was fatal to them and their clique.

In the Constitutional Assembly convened to make a new constitution for the country, they professed astonishingly democratic doctrines. Proclaiming that the fault of former governments had been reliance upon military power, they now proposed to make civil power paramount by allowing the common people to vote. Since up to this time the franchise had been strictly limited to army officers and anciens libres, such a radical departure as general suffrage makes no sense unless conceived as an attempt to break the power of the Negro-controlled army, for surely the élite had no confidence in the wisdom of the peasantry. Weight is given to this explanation by the paradoxical action of the revolutionaries in promoting to high army rank some of the strongest mulatto partisans of civil government.

The new constitution was an immediate failure. Most of the colored élite condemned the giving of voting rights to peasants and workers; the army chiefs, generally black and illiterate, some of them aging veterans of 1803, bitterly resented being made subservient to young, inexperienced civil officers; in fact, even the new mulatto president, Rivière-Hérard, had no conception of government other than by military dictatorship.

Not only was the constitution a failure; so was the government of the young revolutionaries. A part of their weakness lay in their

2. The presidential term varied under different constitutions; some allowed a four-year term with the right of reélection, some six years with no reélection.

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American Marines in Haiti during the next two decades had definite effects upon the social life of the country.

One of the most immediately observable results was the termination of the long political domination by the blacks, and reëstablishment of the colored élite in government control. The four presidents since 1915, Dartiguenave (1915–22), Borno (1922–30), Roy (1930), and Vincent (1930–41), have all been light-skinned. The United States forces had a definite hand in the election of the first two of these men. America's concern was certainly not to return the government to the colored group, but rather to have as titular heads of state men who were educated, temperate of mind, civil in manners—and, of course, mentally "supple" enough to carry out policies agreeable to the State Department at Washington. Since education had for long been a perquisite of the élite only, and since colored élite outnumbered black élite, the chances were good that the choice should fall upon a colored man in 1915 and 1922. Even so, it may have been pure coincidence that the Americans supported mulattoes rather than Negroes; it can hardly be coincidence that the mulatto presidents since 1915 have filled the key offices with colored men. They would assuredly maintain that they had tried to select persons best fitted for office. The fact remains that there are few blacks in the important ministries.

This return to political power of the colored element was one of the most sweeping transformations effected by the Marines, for once again, as in the golden days of Pétion and Boyer, political prestige accompanied and fortified social position. Since 1843 one black or almost black general had succeeded another as president of the republic, and the élite class had perforce to endure them. Socially tolerated these parvenu generals had been, but accepted never. When the Marines arranged the election of President Dartiguenave they effectively reversed the tradition of a century. Since 1915 there have been several Negro candidates for the presidency; in coming elections there are sure to be others; for the present and the near future it is safe to say there will be no more black non-élite presidents.

Such a prophecy is made with a certain assurance because of another result of the Occupation: reform of the army. All true friends of Haiti knew, as most Haitian statesmen had understood for a hundred years, that the huge standing army was an unmitigated burden to the economic, political, and social stability of the country.

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Since it was an entrenched interest, however, no responsible statesman had dared to threaten its hold. The Marines swept it out of existence, undertaking to substitute for it a trained constabulary of only 2,000 men who should combine routine military tasks with police duty in the scattered towns. Results were immediately apparent: the weighty incubus of soldiers' wages was lifted from the treasury; thousands of men were deprived of sinecures and put back into productive economic activities; the constant threat of armed revolution was removed; better order was kept by 2,000 trained men in trim uniform than by twelve times that number of ragged loafers who called themselves soldiers; and since the army was no longer the great steppingstone to political office, the élite felt more secure from assault by ambitious but uneducated army men. From 1843 to 1915 the élite had endured many lower-caste presidents because these were able to control the army; now the army had disappeared.

The Marines did much that was of indisputable benefit to Haiti. This was acknowledged even by the most vocal patriots who soon began to campaign for an end of the Occupation. Where there had been no real work in public health, Americans now built hospitals, established clinics, cleaned up the sources of many diseases, laid down sewage systems, gave the towns pure water. In 1915 there were only three automobiles in the country, and no roads for them to travel; the Americans built many miles of paved roads. In 1915 there had been only one wharf, two short stretches of railroad, two lighthouses, one electric plant; the Americans undertook electrification, telephone systems, the construction of administration buildings, and other public conveniences. Whether in such visible matters or in the obscurer realms of currency, banking, and budgets hardly a phase of daily life was left untouched. And judged by the standards of civilization the Marines improved what they touched.

But rancor against the Americans began early and continued to the bitter end in 1934. The pride of all Haitians was deeply wounded by the Occupation. For 111 years they had governed themselves and had assumed themselves to be a sovereign nation; the Marines patroling the countryside were vivid reminders that Haiti had never been independent except by sufferance, and that white men were once more overseeing the destinies of colored and Negro men. Nevertheless, the reasons proclaimed for opposing the Occupation were not those of hurt vanity. Some of those given were entirely

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remains is the verbal handing down of recollections, one of the most natural things in the world and one congenial to Haitian peasants. Every region, every village, has its accomplished storytellers. The phenomenal resemblances in detail of the coumbite to Dahomean coöperative work may be due therefore to this verbal tradition.

Once the men have cleared and prepared the field, the care of the crop devolves upon the women. For this there has been a long background of tradition. In African agricultural regions, in the plantations of Saint-Domingue during slave days, under the forced labor régimes of Toussaint and his successors, women had been field workers. They had never known anything else. We have seen that many of the present-day practices of Haiti go back to the times of Pétion and Boyer: during this period women did field work, not by decree of government but by force of circumstance. Their men were constantly taken away from the farms for service in the large army; if crops were to be raised, women must do the work. Sometimes soldiers were stationed near their own homes, and could help in production; but they could be called on to march, at short notice and in peacetime, anywhere in the country. Many of the later presidents made it a definite policy frequently to change the station of regiments, so as to prevent revolutionary projects and guard against the soldiers' being tampered with by the disaffected in any single community.

Sir Harry Johnston records his observations on the Haiti of 1910 as follows:

> The women are the best part of the nation. They are splendid, unremitting toilers. In the face of all discouragements with which a bad Government clouds their existence the women of Haiti remind one of certain patient types of ant or termite, who, as fast as you destroy their labour of months or days, hasten to repair it with unslackening energy. The market-women that descend from the country farms to the Haitian towns know that on their way to the market-place, and in that market-place, they will be robbed by soldiers and officers until the margin of profit on the sale of their wares has practically disappeared. Yet they continue to toil, to raise poultry and cattle, till the fields, see to their gardens, make pottery and mats. They cannot stop to reason, but must go on working from three years old to the end of their lives. Such industry (which is almost equally supplemented by that of the peasant husbands) protected should make Haiti one of the richest countries in the world for its size and population; but so long

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as it is cursed by the present military despotism, the utmost that the women of Haiti can do is to keep their country just above the waters of bankruptcy and their households from complete despair.[9]

Since 1910 the military has been reformed, and the women are not mulcted by soldiers and officers; Sir Harry's prophecy regarding the material benefits of removing the curse of military despotism was overly optimistic.

Rounding out the economic life of the peasant is the market, which provides an outlet for whatever surplus is produced, a source of needed supplies and a modicum of money, as well as an almost imperative diversion for hard-working women. The origin of Haitian markets may have been either French or West African, for both regions had them. They were certainly in existence by 1803 in Saint-Domingue, for Madiou speaks of the trade of the plainsmen of the Cul-de-Sac with the holders of what then was called Port Républicain (now Port-au-Prince), adding: "Each Sunday at Croix-des-Bouquets a market was held which brought together more than 4,000 cultivators, male and female, with the permission of the overseers or proprietors."[10] That so large a number came to the market is an indication of the social as well as the economic nature of this institution. Similarly, in the North in 1803, "Rochambeau, now master at the Cape, set about attending to the market established at Petit-Anse in July. After having suppressed all the markets which existed around the Cape, he opened a single and general one, 13th August, at Petit-Anse, one league from the city." The French general was making use of a familiar economic device to carry forward the economic life of the colony during the trying period of the wars.

In independent Haiti it was an almost immediate development that the women generally should do the marketing, the men being either required to work on the land or busy at military duty. It came to be accepted quite simply that going to market was a woman's work. From 1843 on through most of the century there was an additional reason why peasant men would not go to the market towns: recruits were needed, both for the army and whatever revolutionary coup might be brewing; a man who did not relish fighting did better to stay out of sight in the hills. In fact, this has even been called the chief

9. *The Negro in the New World*, pp. 196–197.
10. Thomas Madiou, *Histoire d'Haïti*, III, 24, 34.

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the men as well as the women work arduously. It seems justifiable to conclude that industry has not always been a characteristic of the Haitian male; and to ask why.

One valid reason is, of course, political. As we have seen, until the American Occupation Haiti was greatly overmilitarized. Almost every able-bodied male was at one time or another during his prime a soldier in the army. Since the bane of the country from 1804 to 1915 was its revolutions, there was room for a man to serve either in the regular army or, lured by future promises, in the guerrilla forces of a scheming general. To be drawn away from the land at the very moment of physical maturity was to predispose a youth against humdrum field work. As a soldier he traveled, knew excitement, was fed and clothed, and could loaf, except during battle. So schooled, upon retirement from the army a man was hardly disposed to settle down to steady labor. Even if as a young man he remained upon his farm, he might at any moment be called away to service, just when he was most needed for the crop. If Haiti was to be fed, the women, who alone were exempt from army service, provided the only available regular workers.

Tradition offers another explanation for masculine independence of hard work. The African background of female agricultural labor has been cited. In slavery the men had been degraded by being forced to do work of this sort, while the lot of women hardly differed from what it had been in the old country. Under Toussaint, Dessalines, and Christophe, with their large armies, women, already numerically preponderant, formed the vast majority of field workers. Independent small farming hardly changed the picture. African tradition, moreover, made the man master of his property and wives, the rôle of woman being that of man's inferior and useful servant.

Disease is another partial explanation. Until recently no one seems to have been aware of the prevalence in Haiti of such diseases as hookworm, malaria, and tuberculosis which, without necessarily affecting a person outwardly, may nevertheless sap his vitality, leaving him listless and worn out by even slight exertion. Obviously much of what was called laziness was due to disease. But the flaw in this reasoning is that illness makes no discrimination between the sexes. If men were disease-ridden, so were women: yet the latter were steadily industrious.

Any foray into possible psychological reasons is guesswork. It

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175 178 64 slave system are not likely to assume it again; and the aristocrats, ever intent upon forgetting their African forebears, would certainly not turn to the Dark Continent for political inspiration.

175 642 ●701 643 Although the revolution had brought to the fore men of military experience and even genius, it had driven out or killed every single person of experience in civil government. The affranchis of the old régime had been denied political rights long before 1791; by 1804 few could have had any memory of active participation in government.[1] Toussaint was dead. The only authority of any significance was military. Consequently the new state was built upon army control and directed by army officers. Dessalines as commander in chief took the title of governor-general, later of emperor, but was in reality a military ruler. Fearful as he was of a new French invasion, he set his generals over the districts, organized his people as an army ready for immediate mobilization, and ruled as dictator.

175 642 This was all the Haitians had as political background: a military dictatorship. The Founding Fathers of Haiti, if so they might be called, had almost nothing to work with, nothing to build upon: neither a Magna Carta of the Blacks, nor any precedent of an independent Negro state anywhere in this white man's world; neither heritage of local responsibility and political debate to sow the seeds of democracy, nor any example of self-government in the American tropics to offer a pattern[2]—many of the known forms of government were a practical impossibility for the Haitians because of their need of continued defense against foreign enemies, their slave heritage, their inexperience in self-government, their complete lack of a middle class.

175 668 Hardly one tenth of the people in any case was capable of giving detailed thought to the form which government should take. The mass of ex-slaves had been fighting only *against* slavery, against the hated white rulers, not *for* democracy or any other abstraction. Their freedom achieved, they would not be the ones to make decisions. [642] All political choices would be made by the generals, by men of property and position, by the few whose persistent ambition made them stand out from the masses.

1. Such participation in French colonial politics would have been before the restrictive laws of 1771.

2. It must be recalled that Haiti was the second free country to be established in the Western Hemisphere, and that Liberia, in Africa, was still far in the future.

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175 prosper." Yet every change of administration saw merely a new
178 embroidery on the old theme of sterility.[17]
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The further weakness of social or class consciousness has already
175 been treated at length. It kept the whole nation divided from top to
565 bottom, setting black against colored, North against South, country-
side against town. It meant a perennial civil war, latent at times, but
constantly breaking out in new insurrections.

175 Some day a diligent scholar may try to catalogue the revolutions
669 which Haiti has undergone. Magloire discusses sixty-nine "impor-
701 tant" ones between 1806 and 1879;[18] but the latter date was merely
the threshold of renewed revolutionary activity. There seems to have
been very little pattern in these uprisings, except that almost never
were they a spontaneous revolt of the masses, as the Slave Insurrection
of 1791 had been. The peasants were constantly being impressed into
service with the army of a general who had presidential ambitions.
From the middle years of the nineteenth century certain peasants
found fighting a more profitable trade than any other, and began to
hire themselves out as mercenaries. In the North these professional
guerrilla warriors were known as *cacos*, in the South as *piquets*.
Their methods were those of terror and rapine. They were a constant
menace to the peace, and their suppression was one of the announced
purposes of the American Occupation, for every revolutionary chief
felt it necessary to hire their services.

176 Another recognized procedure of revolution was incendiarism.
369 Haitian politics is almost wholly the affair of townsmen, and more
669 narrowly of the men of the six important towns—Port-au-Prince,
Cap-Haïtien, Jérémie, Les Cayes, Gonaïves, and Saint-Marc. Except
for their principal buildings and villas, these towns are constructed
of wood or other inflammable material. Leaders of insurrections
therefore have habitually set fire to the poorer sections of the towns,
and as frequently as not this threat has won over the populace, who
preferred overthrowing the government to having their homes
burned. Support of the insurrection becomes a form of fire insurance.
Such a state of affairs is eloquent testimony to the cynical attitude
of the political leaders toward the masses.

669 A revolution directed by a general of real ambition was likely to

17. Auguste Magloire, *Histoire d'Haïti d'après un plan nouveau* (Port-au-Prince, 1909), I, 230, 243, 250–251, develops this theme at length.
18. *Ibid.*, Vol. II.

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3. The unimportance of the legislature. It

646 age for the president to dispense, and has preserved the semblance of
642 republican government; but hardly half a dozen legislative sessions in all Haitian history have contributed seminal ideas in politics or initiated true reforms. How could they, indeed, when the president was consistently a dictator of policy?

666 4. The undemocratic nature of the vote. Senators are chosen by
642 the representatives, and the two groups together have generally elected the president, when he did not come to power by revolution. The only chance people have had to vote has been for local officials and representatives. In these cases, the vote has been limited to the élite and the army, with the president's henchmen counting the ballots. Since the Occupation there have been plebiscites on constitutional changes, the people having the right to vote Yes or No.

692 5. The subservience of the courts to the president. They have been
643 filled with president's men, generally astute enough to consult presi-
642 dential wishes before handing down a decision. Foreign merchants soon learned that they could expect little "justice" from the courts if their own cause conflicted with special Haitian interests. Foreign diplomats likewise learned that in crises the courts could involve the simplest issue in such verbal complexity that months of patience would be necessary to unwind the red tape.

641 6. The pliability of "constitutional rights." Freedom of speech and
661 of the press has been notably lacking, although scurrilous attacks on the administration's enemies have often been permitted. Legislators
642 have been expelled. Graft has flourished. In 1833, for example, two representatives were expelled from the House "for systematically opposing the measures of the executive, and persisting in a demand for a statement of public expenditures." A century later a senator was expelled for almost the same reasons.

● 701 7. Militarism. Only in this respect is any real change apparent since
178 the American Occupation. The army was always large up to 1915,
642 and so constituted an economic drain as well as a political menace.
669 Generals had great power: they ruled each department and each arrondissement, were subject only to the president, and were at the bottom of every revolutionary movement.[22] Since the Occupation

[162] [701] 22. In 1842, when the population was still less than a million, there were in the district governments 9 generals, 63 colonels, 48 lieutenant colonels, 9 captains, 1 lieutenant, and 28 medical officers; and in the standing army 33 colonels, 95 lieutenant colonels, 825 captains, 654 lieutenants, 577 sublieutenants and ensigns, 6,815 noncommissioned officers, and 25 medical officers. The army had 28,000 soldiers and cost about $600,000 a year. See John Candler, *Brief Notices of Hayti*, pp. 86 ff.

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numbers in the army have been radically reduced; yet in that very fact there is the possibility for the only armed persons in Haiti, the present Garde d'Haïti, to effect political coups. But at least the budget is not strained by the salaries of thousands of unnecessary soldiers, as was true in pre-Occupation days.

8. The separation of the masses from government. By providing a minimum of local government, but that fairly effective, the national government has been able to keep the peasants out of all but revolutionary politics. Rural communities have ordinarily got along well enough without formal government, so that the history of Haitian political thought and the analysis of Haitian political forms would treat of affairs interesting to only a fraction of the population.

It need hardly be repeated, after a reflection upon these apparent permanencies of political life, that Haiti is not a democracy.

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[p. 234]

XIII

CONSTITUTIONS AND POLITICAL FORMS

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QUITE aside from its castes and the political separation of 1807–20, Haiti has always consisted of two nations, one living in and near the towns and so within reach of established government, the other rural and yet capable of ordering its own affairs by folk rules without much actual governmental machinery. It is through the former that Haiti has a political history. Indeed, one is tempted to say that more than half the people have continually got along without any government whatever of a formal sort, for being peaceably inclined they have found custom and usage [669] sufficient for their needs. These people have been rarely disturbed by the state's rulers; revolutionary chieftains alone have found it worth their while to stir up the country folk to an active interest in politics.

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The formal subdivisions of Haiti have been, through most of its history, three: the *commune*, roughly corresponding to the American township; the *arrondissement*, a group of communes, just as the American county is a group of townships; and the *département*, comprising several arrondissements. All three terms were borrowed from France, although their significance was altered when applied to the Haitian scene.

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In the days of Toussaint, Dessalines, and Christophe, the government had owned vast plantations which were under the control of the military. Pétion and Boyer instituted the commune by combining numerous estates and farms into a group likewise to be controlled by soldiers. Until the American Occupation the police system of the country was military, with ordinary soldiers keeping order and making arrests when necessary. Since few people are less given to disorder than the Haitian peasants, the task of keeping order was not a serious one; indeed, soldiers were frequently stationed among their friends and relatives, who never thought of them as police. It some- [293] times happened, however, that soldiers were assigned to other parts of the country, where they swaggered about with their *cocomacaques* (heavy-jointed canes), using these or the flat of their swords to enforce their often arbitrary commands.

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In every commune recognized by the state was an important

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In every commune recognized by the state was an important

official appointed by the president—the *juge de paix*. The term has little relation to our "justice of the peace." It implies rather the function performed by the old English country squire, who often by his prestige managed to patch up differences between neighbors without allowing matters to come to an issue, but who if the issue were joined sat as judge. The decision of the judge was final in all civil matters up to fifty dollars—and the case was rare in which peasants dealt in affairs as large as this. In the more populous communes (those containing large villages or towns) the juge de paix was more impersonal. He might render decisions, subject to appeal, in cases up to a hundred dollars. All minor police cases came within the province of this official, whose judgment was final in matters up to a twelve-dollar fine or a jail sentence of five days. All criminal cases began with this judge, but those of the gravest sort were speedily sent to higher courts.

By and large rural Haiti got along with a minimum of civil government, and urban Haiti was governed much as a small provincial town of the nineteenth century.

Several communes made an arrondissement, another political subdivision with a distinct military cast. Through most of her history Haiti had an average of about twenty of these arrondissements, each of them presided over by an army officer of high rank appointed by the president. In arrondissements containing important capitals a general, in lesser ones a brigadier-general, exercised both military and civil authority. This man was the medium through which the central government made known its decisions and laws. Because life could be tedious in a dull country town, in a district full of peaceful peasants, many of the generals spent their time in reflecting upon the chances of a successful insurrection which might make them important in national affairs. As already noted, the standard of discipline in the army was never very high, so that the presiding officer of an arrondissement might have a real sinecure if he was not ambitious.[1]

1. The military arrondissement always bore the name of the principal town or village within its borders. The following list shows the important places during the time of Boyer:
In the department of the North there were five arrondissements: Cap-Haïtien, Grande-Rivière, Marmelade, Fort Liberté, Limbé.
In the Northwest, three: Port-de-Paix, Cap Nicolas Môle, Le Borgne.
In the Artibonite, three: Saint-Marc, Gonaïves, Mirebalais.
In the West, three: Port-au-Prince, Jacmel, Léogane.
In the South, five: Les Cayes, Jérémie, Aquin, Tiburon, Nippes.

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to the Americans who ruled Haiti through his office. This constitution once more increased the power of the president.

1932. Vincent's constitution, professing to be quite different from the two in effect during the Occupation, but actually closely resembling the 1927 revision with its concentration of power in executive hands. In 1935 an important amendment was added, making it possible for the president to be reëlected.

Despite this welter of constitutions, the essential framework of Haitian government has consisted, except for brief interruptions, of a president, a legislature, and courts. The term of the presidency has varied from four to seven years (in the early days, for life) with the privilege of reëlection being now forbidden, now granted. Two presidents who tried to extend their terms, Salnave and Salomon, were deposed by revolutions for their temerity. Their distinction of being among the few to serve out the allotted term was thus marred by an ignominious end.

Regularly the president was obligated to "maintain internal peace" —a requirement few heads of state have been able to carry out, since internal peace has been most elusive. To aid him in his task he has been given wide powers: he commands the army (always large until 1915; every president except one between 1804 and 1915 was a general) and the navy (never more than a few ill-conditioned vessels, but these important in the general roadless condition of the country); most constitutions also gave him the right to issue necessary proclamations in order to deal with special crises. He "watches over" tribunals by means of appointed commissioners; by this arrangement he may obviously exert pressure for favorable judgments in cases which interest him.

The one body which might conceivably check the president, namely, the legislature, has generally been composed of the president's men, for the Senate has usually been elected by the lower house from a list of candidates proposed by the president, while the representatives would hardly dare defy the man who controlled the army (which presided over such elections) and could dissolve the legislature. By most of the constitutions the president proposed to the legislature all laws except those concerning taxation; even here, since he directed the receipt and issue of public moneys, he was not really limited. Over foreign affairs the executive had effective control by

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priations of supplies to the branches of government; the Senate did not initiate legislation. In so far as the Senate checked the president, this check consisted in the body's being in permanent session. A vacation might be voted, but even during this period a resident committee was in the capital, so that attention to presidential actions might always be called by a senator's speeches; and the Senate could reconvene suddenly at will.

The Chamber of Representatives, composed of men of twenty-five and over, was chosen every five years by the "electoral colleges" of the communes—men elected by the leading citizens of the commune. No law is effective "whose draft has not been proposed by the executive, discussed and adopted by the representatives, and decreed by the Senate." It might seem that the phrase, "discussed and adopted by the representatives," would give much power to a Chamber in office for five years; actually the Chamber has rarely proved obstinate, and for good reason. At the expiration of the term of the legislators, the president convokes the communal assemblies to choose new deputies or to reëlect old ones; the army "keeps order" at the election, the Electoral College is hand-picked, and so the president's men have generally been chosen. Their pay has been two hundred dollars a month during the sitting, and a dollar a league for traveling expenses.

Pétion's constitution of 1816 evolved a masterpiece of deceptive generosity in stating that there should be "universal suffrage—except for women, criminals, idiots, and menials—by ballot." Although the group of criminals and idiots might be small, women were more than half the population, and "menials" was interpreted to mean not only house servants but also peasants; in other words, there was "universal suffrage" of about three per cent of the population at the outside. The élite and the army were the only potential voters. Since the elections were held under the watchful eye of the soldiers, and the ballots counted by presidential appointees, there was often extraordinary unity of public opinion.

The judicial branch of the national government, as distinct from the juge de paix of the commune and the courts in the important towns, existed in part only on paper. There was generally a provision in the constitution, for example, for a High Court of Justice, which should have jurisdiction in all charges preferred by the legislative bodies against their own members, against the president of the re-

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674 369 Soldiers, then, had no great difficulty policing town and countryside, for there was little more crime in the towns than in rural regions. A person arrested would be haled before the nearest juge de 696 paix who would, if necessary, sentence him to jail—which meant 697 sending him to one of the larger towns. This was rather a severe penalty, for the jails were filthy; moreover, only about ten cents a week was ordinarily allotted to each prisoner for food with the result that if a prisoner's family did not supply him, he was likely to be near starvation. Extra work was required for extra fare. Haiti was probably no worse off in respect to its jails than most European and American countries at the time, for this was before the era of prison reform. Inmates of jails were likely to be only petty thieves.

697 During certain régimes the presidents or their generals managed to have numbers of convicts sentenced to hard work, in order to have forced labor on their private estates or projects dear to them. Under any administration there were likely to be a few convicts who performed repair work on streets and roads. It was the usual practice to chain or rope them together by pairs, three yards apart; accompanied by soldiers with loaded muskets, the convicts labored from daylight to sunset, with an hour and a half for a meal at noon. The government pretended to provide for them, but in order to save expense two of the criminals accompanied by two soldiers with fixed bayonets were sent about the neighborhood to beg for the group. The result was that the wretches went ill fed and half naked. They slept in jail on beds which were little more than boards.

701 175 The final and most persistent branch of government has been the army.[11] Owing to the overmilitarization of Haiti, generals were perennially participating in the civil government—or engaged in overthrowing it. It was to be expected that following the revolution the new independent state formed in 1804 should have a military cast. Dessalines, Christophe, Pétion, Geffrard, Boyer, Cangé, Yayou, Magloire Ambroise, Férou, François, Capoix, Riguad—these were the great generals and the only important statesmen. It was as if in America not only Washington had been a military leader, but also Adams, Jefferson, Franklin, Jay, Hamilton, Madison, Pinckney,

[647] 11. In most governments there has been a body which, although connected with the legislature, had functions pertaining to the law. This was the Chamber of Accounts, a body of five men who examined into and reported to the president upon every branch of expenditure and collection of revenues. It might recommend to him certain financial reforms or improvements, but had no power to enforce its suggestions.

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Patrick Henry, Randolph, and Samuel Adams as well. Madiou estimates that there were 52,500 men in the army in 1804, when Haiti's population was less than 400,000.[12]

Fear of the return of the French kept the army large, and the administration of agricultural affairs under both Dessalines and Christophe was in charge of it. The construction of a fortress in every district put laborers under the direct influence of the military.[13] In addition to the corvée, or forced labor, required to construct these fortifications, the workers of the nation in the time of Dessalines also had to clear the hillsides and the ravines connecting valleys, and plant them with bananas, yams, plantains, and other provisions to supply the garrisons which manned the forts.

The Emperor left his army to feed and clothe itself. Occasional rations were given as a part of wages, but they were irregularly distributed. In the South particularly the troops began to murmur and desert, stirred up by their mulatto officers who were themselves no better rewarded, and who were already beginning their plot to overthrow the Emperor. The accusation was made that the money which should have gone to the army was being used on Dessalines' mistresses. The soldiers indulged themselves in that most damaging of Haitian weapons, the witty song, full of double meanings but deadly in its thrust at public personages; by these symbolic songs the fall of Dessalines was not only predicted but actually prepared.

Christophe kept a military state, but he had learned many lessons from watching affairs under Dessalines. Realizing that he could not trust the preservation of his régime to the fickleness of an army which had seen his rise to power and had already deserted its first commander in chief, knowing too that there was treason even among his own guards, he made a contract with a company of foreign merchants for the transportation of twenty thousand blacks from Africa. These were to make up a military force independent of the Haitians,

12. *Histoire d'Haïti*, III, 122.

13. Each general was commanded by Dessalines to build a fort on one of the mountains in his district. The design seems to have been left to the general. A few of the fortifications were truly impressive. Christophe built La Ferrière near Milot in the North; Pétion the fortress of Jean-Jacques at Grand Fond, four leagues from Port-au-Prince; Capoix called his Les Trois Pavillons, in the range of mountains back of Port-de-Paix; Cangé and Yayou together built Campan near Léogane; Magloire Ambroise constructed a fortress near Cap Rouge and called it by that name; Geffrard built Pharon near Les Cayes; Pérou built Madrane near Jérémie; François began but did not finish Le Bonnet Carré near Aquin.

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643 and being the personal property of the monarch and recipients of his
701 royal favor, were to constitute the perpetual support of his throne.
625 Only four thousand of these compulsory immigrants came, but
625 Christophe made them into very effective companies of police, whom he named the Royal Dahomets from the country of their origin. They performed the duties of a gendarmerie in all the districts of the North, drove the cultivators to their labors, watched over property and the security of the proprietors, and maintained industry and a strict subordination among all ranks of people in the kingdom.

175 Christophe's regular troops were well clothed and armed. They
701 were kept under stern discipline, no mercy or relaxation being
[703] shown them; delinquency on their part brought flagellation or a military execution. The troops received only a nominal stipend, and each soldier was required to gain his subsistence by cultivating a few acres of ground allotted to him out of the national domain. The usual quarter of this income had, of course, to be turned over as a tax to the state. Although the King's power was maintained by soldiers, he never coddled them. "The soldiers of the army as well as the laborers of the plantations lived in perpetual dread of the rod of authority," wrote Brown.[14] They seem to have developed a tradition of some special fetish power possessed by Christophe, a sort of *mana*, to use anthropological terminology. Even princes and dukes were chastised by the King's orders, and then made to do menial work by way of further punishment.

Conditions in the republic of Pétion were similar and yet different —similar in that soldiers formed the support of the government, different in that Pétion did not rule by fear. Every individual man between 16 and 60, a few cultivators excepted, was required by law to be a soldier, either in the *corps solde* (regular troops of the line), or in the *corps non solde* (national guard). The former, both under Pétion and in the early days of Boyer, had about 40,000 men distributed in strong detachments in towns and communes all over the
[914] country. Their costume, instead of being neat, uniform, and daily inspected as with Christophe's army, was ragged and mismated; they
[465] managed according to popular parlance "to find linen on every
[541] hedge." They were paid from fifty cents to a dollar a month, according to the existing solvency or exigency of the state. Each week
[512] end a parade and review was held, and then a small fatigue party was taken to do actual duty, the others being dismissed until the next

14. Op. cit., II, 209.

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Saturday to use their time cultivating the soil, pursuing some mechanical craft, or acting as day laborers.

It must be once more emphasized that the civil was everywhere subservient to the military power. The administration of justice in tribunals was carried out only at the pleasure of the army chiefs. No person would have dared bring suit against a high officer; the only efficacious way of obtaining justice against petty offenders was through summary decision and corporal chastisement by the commanding officer.

By the close of Boyer's rule, during which he had kept the army up to its full numbers while pursuing a policy of economy, the outward appearance of the troops was almost ludicrous. They appeared at review wearing generally what pleased them or what they could scrape together, for they had to supply their own clothing and arms. The only effectual employment of the soldiery was as armed police, for Haiti never had to fight external powers. The soldiers drummed and fifed, mustered on parade and went through the formations, but otherwise merely stood (or sat) sentry at the doors of public offices, hunted up at the command of the magistrates *les mauvais sujets*, guarded prisons and prisoners on chain-gang duty, loitered at barriers, collected tolls, and examined permits.

A large army, practically idle, could easily be seduced into the support of revolutionary movements. Principles of discipline and loyalty current in European armies of the day were nonexistent in nineteenth-century Haiti. The numbers in the army varied from twenty to forty or fifty thousand. A strange estimate was made for the year 1867: 6,500 general officers and staff; 7,000 regimental officers; and only 6,500 soldiers.[15] It was said that "*tout Haïtien qui n'était pas général de division était au moins soldat.*" The higher grades became rewards for political service; the lower ranks had to be filled up by recruiting parties—when these were abroad, all men who did not desire a period of enforced leisure away from home remained in hiding.

While the army was not alone responsible for the tragedies of insurrection and mismanagement which consistently befell the country, it was never uninvolved in these misfortunes. Only the radical reforms undertaken by the American Occupation saved modern Haiti from continued military domination.

15. Sir Spenser St. John, *Hayti, or the Black Republic*, p. 310.

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quarantine: "Haiti for the Haitians." At first the prohibition on white ownership of land and financial investment in the country was attributable to a fear of reënslavement; then to a fear that financial commitments (which no Haitian really understood) would somehow lead to political subjection; and always the feeling of pride, combined with a desperate need of self-justification, made the Haitians want to keep their country entirely under control of their own people. It is, of course, possible that if white people had been allowed free access to the country, they might have destroyed the "Black Republic"; excluding white men altogether, however, seriously curtailed economic activity.

2. Overmilitarization. The army, numerous out of all proportion to the population, took the ablest men out of production, drained the treasury, and was a constant source of revolutionary activity.

3. Poor methods of agriculture. Critics often complained that Haiti ought to return to the system of large estates and forced labor; it apparently occurred to no one to suggest that education of the peasants might have made the land productive once more, by teaching the people new methods. Dividing up the land was an inevitable necessity unless every ruler were as willing as Christophe to be a dictator and as capable; but to keep the peasants in ignorance was not a necessity. Peasant landowners in Europe frequently tend their acres with skill, while in Haiti, with neither experience nor instruction in methods of tillage on small farms, the people developed steadily more destructive ways of farming.

4. Inefficient marketing. Assuming Haiti's dependence upon the staple crop of coffee and the handling of this crop by foreign merchants, every government seemed intent upon putting obstacles in the path of efficient marketing procedure.[15] The white trader could deal only with Haitians (who were ignorant in matters of international trade); although the foreigner had to pay a huge license fee in order to deal at all in Haitian products, he got no security in return, for he might not own land or obtain a lien on the real property of a citizen.[16] Banking and exchange facilities were wholly lacking.

15. In 1833 Boyer thought to "encourage" Haitians to commercial effort by gradually expelling foreign traders, refusing to grant them any new licenses to trade. His scheme failed, for the élite were not interested. Indeed, the actual effect of his plan was to disrupt the steady flow of exports and increase discontent with Boyer on the part of the élite plantation owners whose small profits were momentarily interrupted.

16. See James Franklin, *The Present State of Hayti*, pp. 374 ff.